Indian Cultural Centres

3774. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of Indian cultural centres functioning abroad;

(b) the major activities of these centres;

(c) whether the activities of these centres are being assessed periodically; and

(d) if so, the details of recent assessment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) ICCR maintains 17 Cultural Centres abroad. Major activities of the Centres include conducting classes of Indian Music and Dance forms, Yoga and Hindi, facilitating the visit of distinguished personalities, arranging performances of dancers and musicians from India, holding exhibitions, arranging seminars, etc. The Cultural Centres also maintain libraries having books and CDs on Indian Music & dance forms, culture, literature, etc.

(c) and (d) The activities of the Cultural Centres are being regularly monitored through monthly reports sent by them and independent feedback from the Missions. Besides, a detailed questionnaire has been devised to assess their performance.

Restrictions on UTL Operations

†3775. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:
SHRI TARIQ ANWER:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have warned the Government of Nepal that the bilateral economic agreements would be affected adversely if the ban imposed on the Indian Telecom Company 'United Telecom Ltd.' is not withdrawn by it at an early date; and

(b) if so, the reactions of Government of Nepal thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Following the dismissal of the multi-party government and imposition of emergency in Nepal on February 1, 2005, all telecommunication services in the country were temporarily suspended. Basic telephone services based on landlines, provided by Nepal Telecom, were restored on February 8, 2005. However, United Telecom

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.